MARVEL

017

SOULE
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STAR WARS™ DARTH VADER

BURNING SEAS

Part V

The water world of Mon Cala is in open rebellion! After suffering a string of defeats against the Mon Calamari, Governor Tarkin devises a plan to end the fight by sending Darth Vader to capture their king, Lee-Char!

Meanwhile, Vader's Inquisitors corner Lee-Char's advisors, Jedi Knight Ferren Barr and his last disciple, Verla, deep below the surface of the planet.

Trapped and with nowhere else to run, Barr reveals a dark secret about the role the clones played in overthrowing the Jedi. A secret that might be their only hope of survival....

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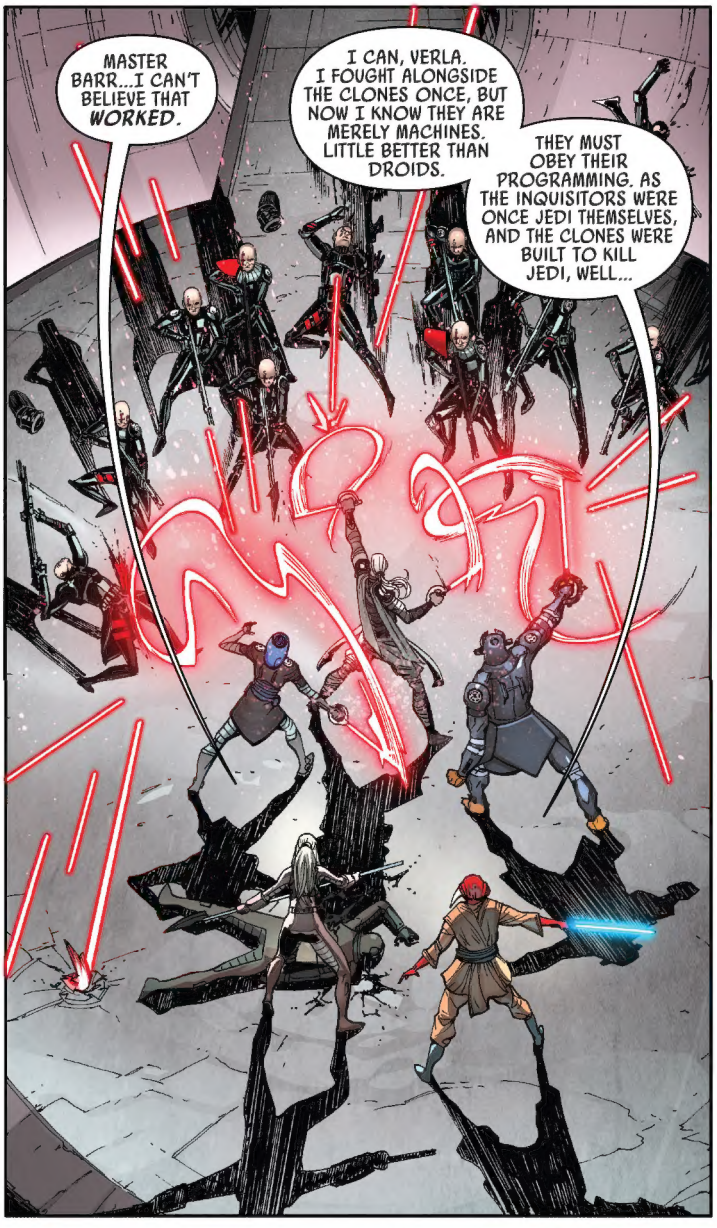
EXECUTE ORDER 66.
UH...
DON'T YOU DARE, YOU STUPID CLONES!
WE'RE INQUISITORS, NOT--
VERLA... GET BACK.
KILL THE JEDI.


MASTER BARR...I CAN'T BELIEVE THAT WORKED.
I CAN, VERLA. I FOUGHT ALONGSIDE THE CLONES ONCE, BUT NOW I KNOW THEY ARE MERELY MACHINES. LITTLE BETTER THAN DROIDS.
THEY MUST OBEY THEIR PROGRAMMING. AS THE INQUISITORS WERE ONCE JEDI THEMSELVES, AND THE CLONES WERE BUILT TO KILL JEDI, WELL...

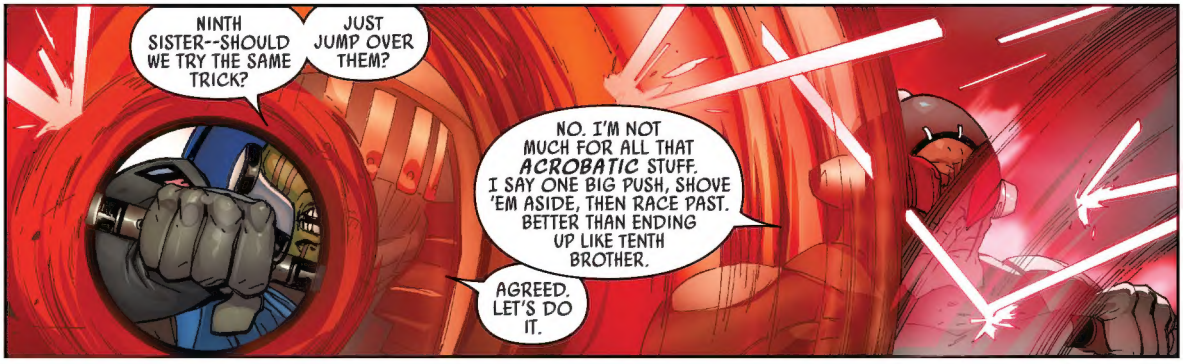
...YOU SEE THE RESULT.
AGH!

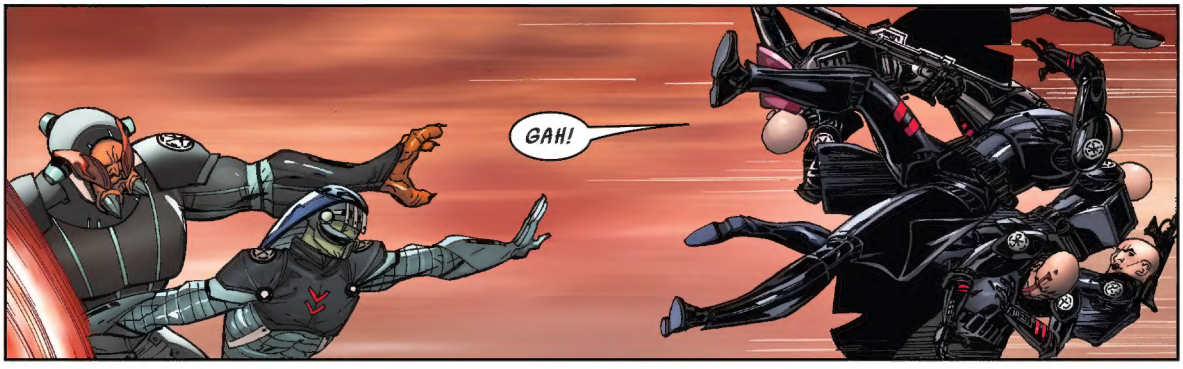
BUT YOU ARE ALSO A JEDI, AND I AM WITH YOU. ONCE THEY KILL THE INQUISITORS, WON'T THE CLONES COME FOR US?
NO. REMEMBER WHY YOU SOUGHT ME OUT.

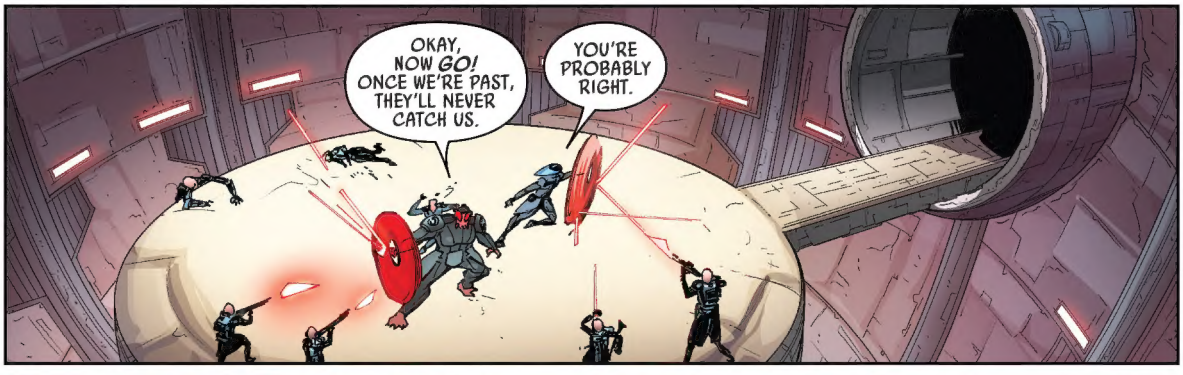
FOLLOW ME, AND I WILL TEACH YOU HOW TO USE THIS GIFT.

NOW, VERLA, USE EVERYTHING I HAVE TAUGHT YOU...

...AND LEAP.
NO... NO!
THEY'RE GETTING AWAY!
FOCUS, SIXTH BROTHER. WE'VE GOT BIGGER PROBLEMS!
WHERE WILL WE GO, MASTER BARR? HOW WILL WE ESCAPE?
YOU MUST HIDE, VERLA. GO DEEP INTO THESE TUNNELS, WAIT UNTIL THE BATTLE IS DONE, FIND ALLIES, LEAVE THIS PLANET WHEN YOU CAN.
THERE MUST BE OTHER JEDI LEFT IN THE GALAXY. I HAVE FOUND NO RECORDS OF KENOBI'S DEATH, OR YODA'S. PERHAPS QUINLAN VOS SURVIVES.
FIND ONE, HAVE THEM TEACH YOU.
YOU WILL NOT COME WITH ME?
NO. I HAVE ANOTHER FIGHT AHEAD OF ME.
ONE I INTEND TO WIN.

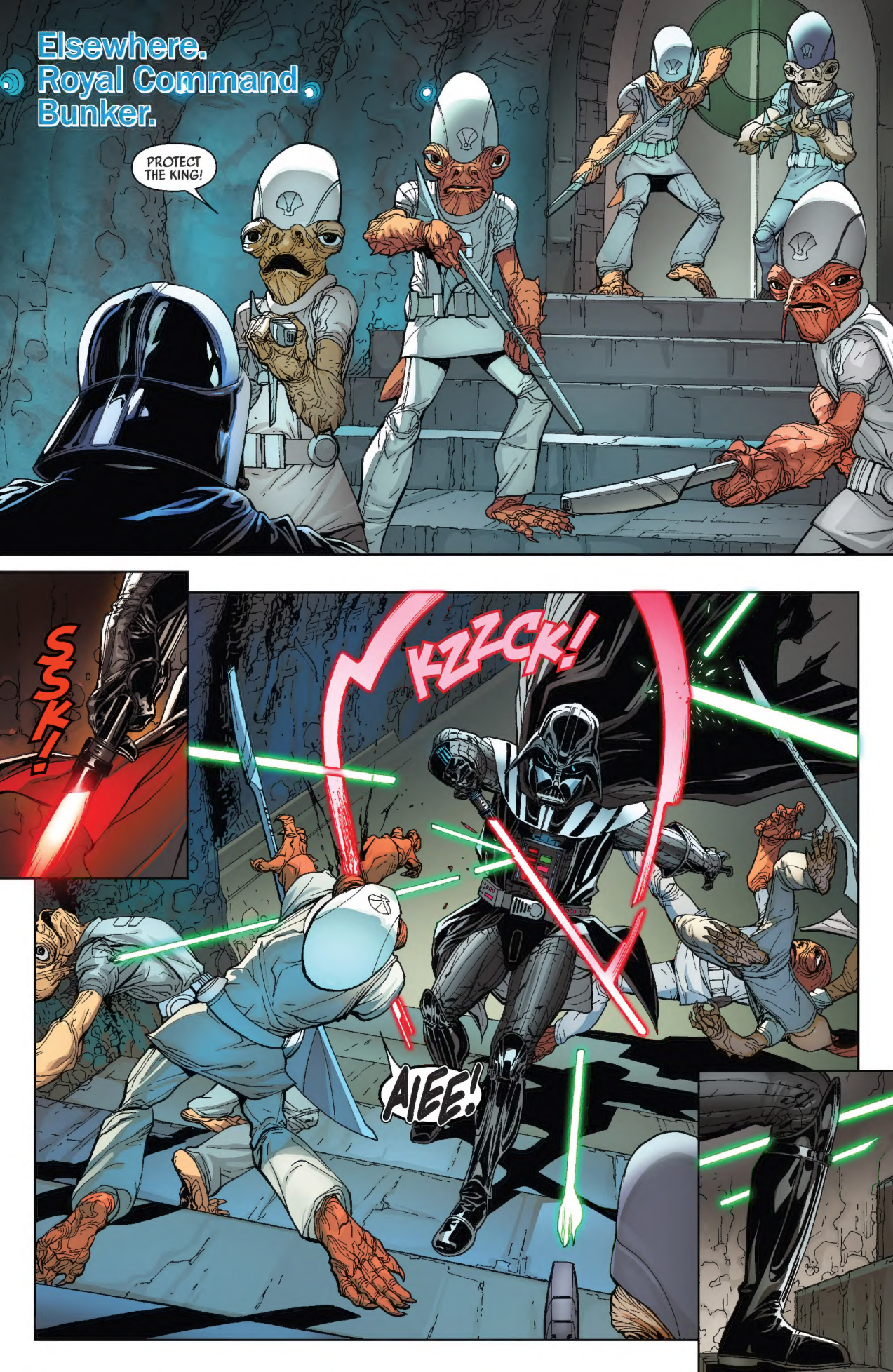

NINTH SISTER--SHOULD WE TRY THE SAME TRICK?
JUST JUMP OVER THEM?
NO. I'M NOT MUCH FOR ALL THAT ACROBATIC STUFF. I SAY ONE BIG PUSH, SHOVE 'EM ASIDE, THEN RACE PAST. BETTER THAN ENDING UP LIKE TENTH BROTHER.
AGREED. LET'S DO IT.


GAH!


OKAY, NOW GO! ONCE WE'RE PAST, THEY'LL NEVER CATCH US.
YOU'RE PROBABLY RIGHT.

SSK!
BUT WHY TAKE THE CHANCE?
AAAGH!

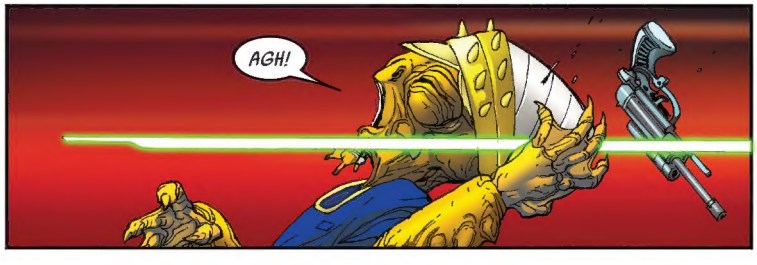
YOU'RE DEAD, SIXTH! THIS WON'T STOP ME...AND THEN YOU'RE DEAD!
KEEP THE CLONES BUSY FOR A WHILE, WILL YOU, NINTH SISTER?
GOOD LUCK. YOU WERE ALWAYS MY FAVORITE.


Elsewhere.
Royal Command Bunker.
PROTECT THE KING!
SSK!
KZZCK!
AIEE!

STOP THERE!

KZZCK

KTNG


AGH!

TARKIN. I HAVE THE KING.
VERY GOOD, LORD VADER. TRANSMIT YOUR PRECISE LOCATION.
WHY? WILL YOU SEND A SHUTTLE?
NOT EXACTLY. NOT YET.
TAKE KING LEE-CHAR...
...TO A WINDOW.
YOU HAVE THE COORDINATES, LIEUTENANT?
YES, GOVERNOR TARKIN.
VERY GOOD.
"PULL BACK OUR FORCES IN THE AREA. AND THEN...
"...YOU MAY FIRE AT WILL."
CHOOOM!

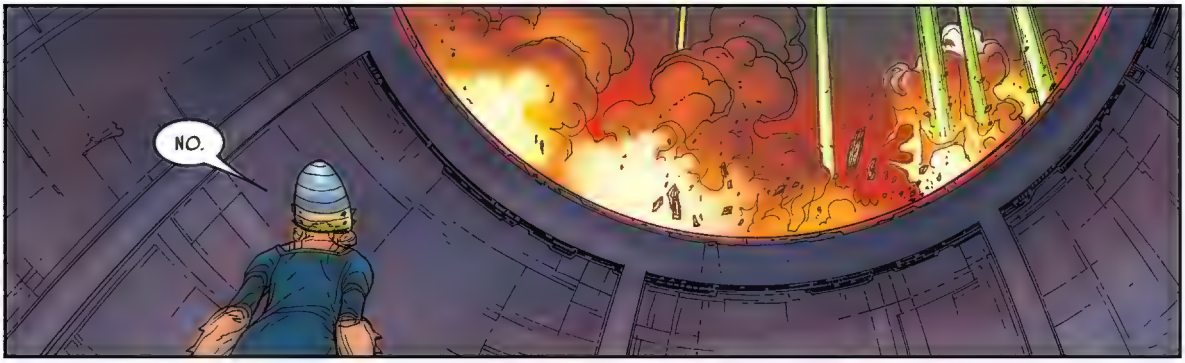
FSSSSSSSS!

KRAKOOM
YOU ARE BEASTS. PARASITES. EVIL.
BUT DESTROY AS MANY CITIES AS YOU LIKE.
IT CHANGES NOTHING.

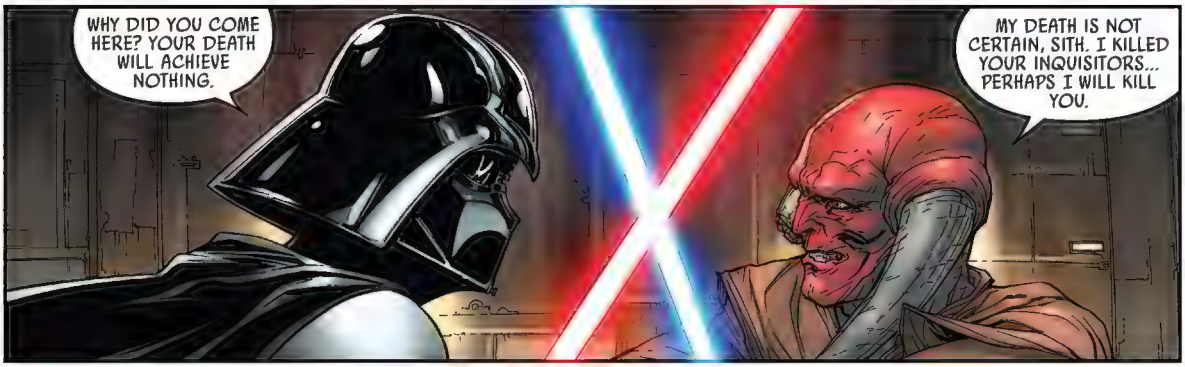
I WILL NOT SURRENDER MY PLANET TO YOU. THE GRASPING TENTACLES OF THE EMPIRE WILL NOT TAKE UP MON CALA.
IMPRISON ME, EVEN TORTURE ME IF YOU LIKE...IT DOES NOT MATTER.
THE MON CALAMARI ARE CENTRAL TO THE DESTRUCTION OF THE EMPIRE, AND IT WILL NOT HAPPEN WITHOUT ME.
I KNOW THIS TO BE TRUE.
A TWITCH OF MY FINGER COULD END YOU FOREVER.
YOU ARE CENTRAL TO NOTHING. YOU DO NOT MATTER. YOU HAVE BEEN LIED TO.
SPSSSSH!
NO, VADER.
SSK!
I TOLD HIM THE TRUTH.

WE SHALL SEE.
SSK!
THWWWWMMM!
KZZCK!

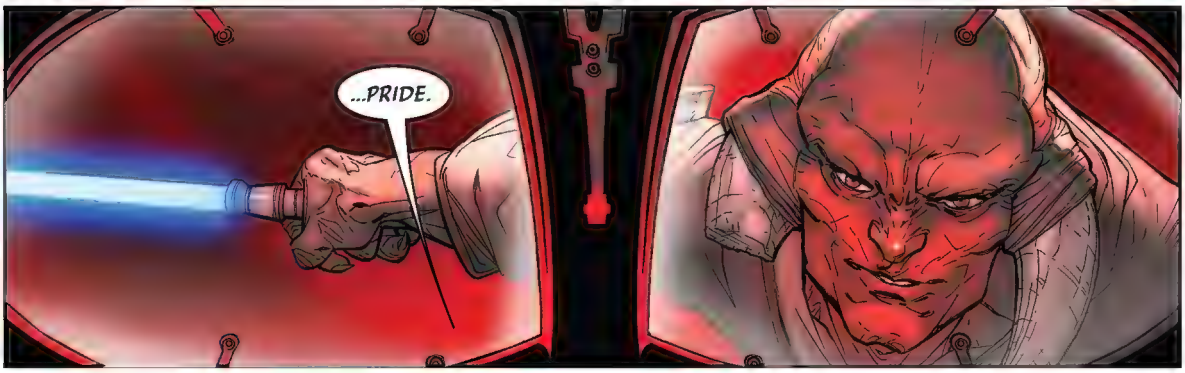
The South Pole.
"ADMIRAL RADDUS... ZERAN TOWN JUST WENT OFFLINE. ALL SIGNALS JUST...STOPPED."
THAT'S THE FIFTH NORTHERN SETTLEMENT THE IMPERIALS HAVE DESTROYED. I DON'T BELIEVE THIS.
ARE THEY TRYING TO WIPE US OFF THE PLANET?
THE ORBITAL BOMBARDMENT IS INCREASING ITS PACE, ADMIRAL, ALTHOUGH NO HITS IN THE SOUTHERN HEMISPHERE SO FAR.
THE CURVE OF THE PLANET IS IN OUR FAVOR, AT LEAST FOR NOW. THEY'LL GET TO US EVENTUALLY.
OUR LINKED SHIELDS CAN PROBABLY SURVIVE A FEW HITS, BUT AFTER THAT... HNH.
ORDER THE CREWS TO PREPARE TO DE-LINK THE CRUISERS AND SCATTER, ON MY MARK.
NO REASON TO MAKE IT EASY FOR THESE DEVILSQUIDS.
OF COURSE, SIR. AND UNTIL THEN?
WE FIGHT.


NO.

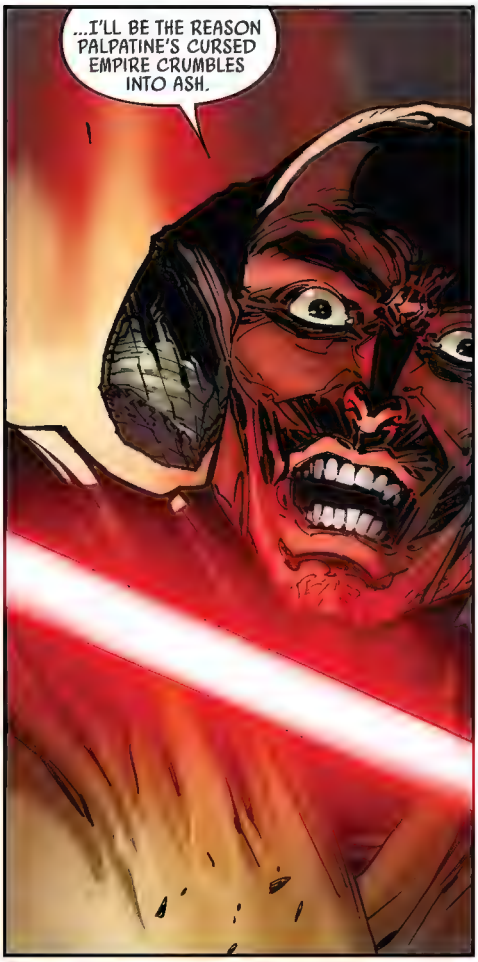
NO.


WHY DID YOU COME HERE? YOUR DEATH WILL ACHIEVE NOTHING.
MY DEATH IS NOT CERTAIN, SITH. I KILLED YOUR INQUISITORS... PERHAPS I WILL KILL YOU.

NO. I SENSE SOMETHING... YOU KNOW YOU CANNOT DEFEAT ME, YET YOU CAME ANYWAY. THERE MUST BE A REASON.
I SENSE...


...PRIDE.

I SHOULD BE PROUD, VADER.
WHEN ALL IS SAID AND DONE...


...I'LL BE THE REASON PALPATINE'S CURSED EMPIRE CRUMBLES INTO ASH.

YOU ASSASSINATED THE IMPERIAL AMBASSADOR.
OF COURSE I DID. I COULDN'T TAKE THE RISK THAT NEGOTIATIONS WOULD BEAR FRUIT, THAT THIS INEVITABLE CONFLICT WOULD BE DELAYED.
AND WITH YOU AND YOUR HOUNDS OUT THERE HUNTING ME, MY OWN TIME WAS RUNNING SHORT. I NEEDED TO LIGHT A FIRE...AND SO I DID.

W-WHAT? YOU...BUT...
ALL THIS DEATH, ALL THIS PAIN...BECAUSE OF YOU?

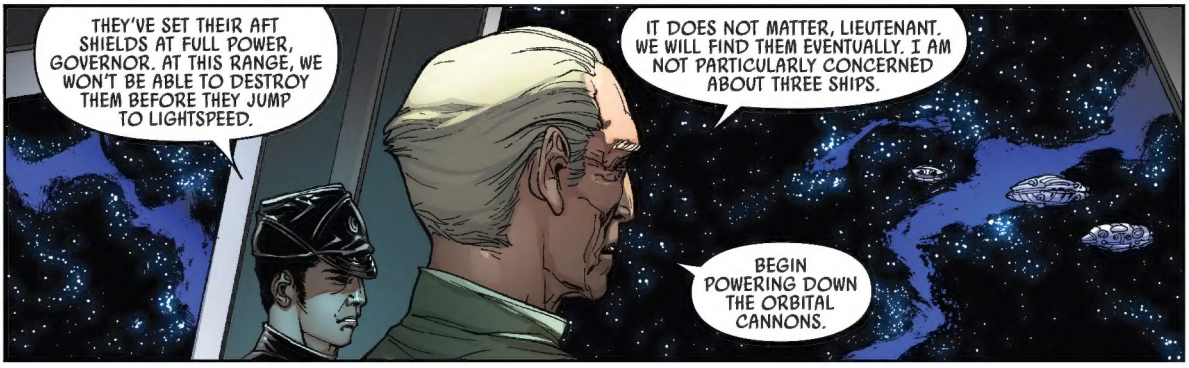
BUT YOU ARE A JEDI!

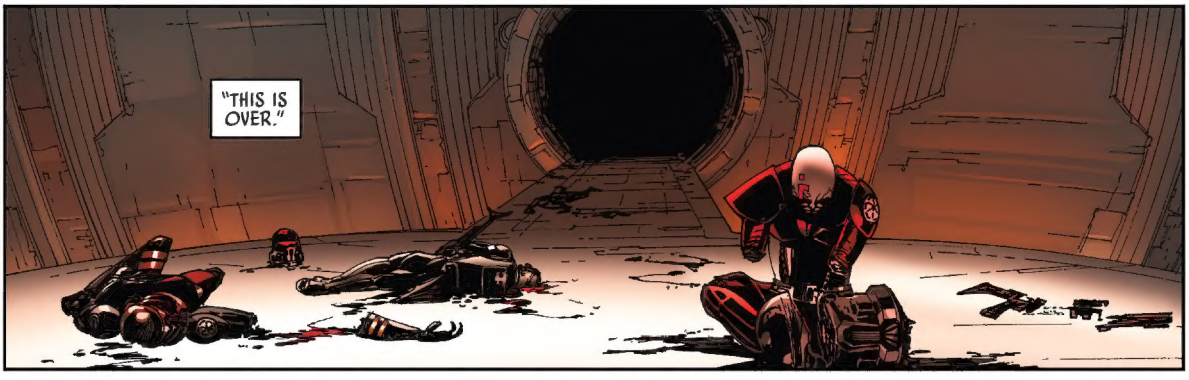
ALL UNITS, PLANET-WIDE. THIS IS KING LEE-CHAR.
I AM NOT UNDER DURESS, AND I MAKE THIS ORDER OF MY OWN FREE WILL, USING COMMAND CODE EBB VORTEX NINE.
STAND DOWN, IMMEDIATELY. REPEAT-- ALL MON CALA DEFENSE FORCES...STAND DOWN.
WHAT IS THIS? NO...WE CAN'T JUST... GIVE UP!
GOVERNOR TARKIN, I HAVE ORDERED A CEASE-FIRE. THIS... THIS WAS A MISUNDERSTANDING. I AM READY TO TALK TERMS. JUST...PLEASE...
...STOP KILLING MY PEOPLE.
EXCELLENT, YOUR MAJESTY. I ACCEPT YOUR SURRENDER. I WILL SEND A SHUTTLE TO TAKE YOU INTO CUSTODY.
IN THE MEANTIME...
...THE BOMBARDMENT WILL CONTINUE.
NO...NO! PLEASE! I'VE GIVEN YOU WHAT YOU WANT! PLEASE!

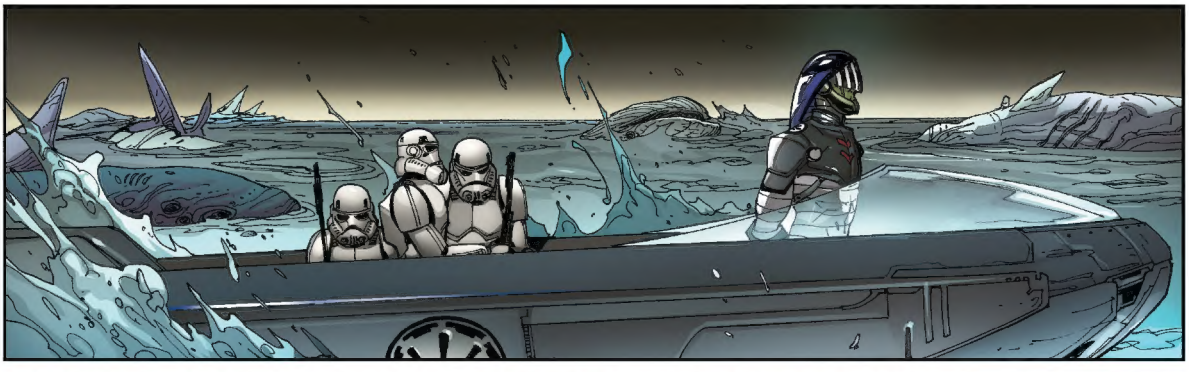
HEH.
HAHA.
HAHAHA HAHAHAHA HAHAHA!
THE IMPERIAL BOMBARDMENT CONTINUES TO INTENSIFY, ADMIRAL. THEY'VE STARTED HITTING TARGETS IN THIS HEMISPHERE.
I SEE THAT, COMMANDER. ORDER ALL CRUISERS TO LAUNCH.
LAUNCH, SIR? BUT THESE ARE TRADING SHIPS, UNARMED. IF WE TRY TO RUN THE IMPERIAL BLOCKADE, WE'LL...
BETTER THAN SITTING HERE WAITING TO DIE. SOME OF US MIGHT MAKE IT THROUGH. WE CAN RETURN ANOTHER DAY TO LIBERATE OUR HOME.
WE ARE A PEOPLE OF THE SEA. SPACE...MAY NOT BE SO DIFFERENT.
CONVEY MY ORDERS.
WHY ARE YOU *LAUGHING?*
MY PLANET IS *DYING!* YOU SAID THE MON CALAMARI WOULD *SAVE* THE GALAXY. THAT YOU FORESAW IT.
AND I DID. I DID NOT LIE TO YOU, YOUR MAJESTY.

"A TIME WILL COME, DECADES FROM NOW, WHEN THE SHIPS OF THE MON CALAMARI ARE AT THE FOREFRONT OF A GREAT REBELLION.
"AND THEN, AGAIN, DECADES AFTER THAT.
"YOUR PEOPLE'S VESSELS WILL BE A SYMBOL OF FREEDOM AND DEFIANCE ACROSS THE GALAXY.
"AND IT ALL STARTED HERE, YOUR MAJESTY.
"WITH YOU."
BUT BILLIONS OF PEOPLE ARE DYING.
BILLIONS, WHO WILL INSPIRE TRILLIONS.
AS WAS MY PLAN.
YOU ARE NO JEDI.
PERHAPS NOT. NOT ANYMORE. MAKES TWO OF US, EH?
BUT I MADE MY CHOICES. AND I MIGHT NOT BE A JEDI...

"...BUT I STILL BEAT THE SITH."


THEY'VE SET THEIR AFT SHIELDS AT FULL POWER, GOVERNOR. AT THIS RANGE, WE WON'T BE ABLE TO DESTROY THEM BEFORE THEY JUMP TO LIGHTSPEED.
IT DOES NOT MATTER, LIEUTENANT. WE WILL FIND THEM EVENTUALLY. I AM NOT PARTICULARLY CONCERNED ABOUT THREE SHIPS.
BEGIN POWERING DOWN THE ORBITAL CANNONS.


"THIS IS OVER."



THIS IS NOT OVER.
YOU WILL SEE. MON CALA WILL RISE AGAIN. SOMEHOW. SOMEDAY.

THERE IS NO MON CALA.
"MON CALA IS GONE.
"THERE IS ONLY THE EMPIRE."

DARTH VADER

NEXT ISSUE:

AN OROBOROS
RELEASE - DCP